

Immigrant Voting Rights Taskforce

January 14, 5:00-6:30 PM

City Hall, Room 370

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Abdullahi Jama, Sharon Maeda, Many Uch, Rich Stolz, Alex Miller, Trang Tu, Dorothy Wong, Heather Villanueva, Laura Flores Cantrell,

Members Absent: Luis Fraga, Tanya Santiago, Hilary Stern, Diane Butler

OIRA Staff Present: Aaliyah Gupta, Sahar Fathi

Call to Order: 5:17 pm

Welcome (Sharon)

Sharon welcomed everyone. Abdullahi made an announcement that the 37th District Democrats are asking for people to sign on to a petition for more languages for voter registration forms.

Brainstorm for Community Roundtable (Sharon)-

The meeting will be held on May 8 at 6 pm at the Filipino Community Center.

There was some discussion around the best way to do an icebreaker with the number of people invited and the lack of time. There was also discussion around the various types of barriers (cultural, economic, geography, linguistic), what kinds of experiences people were having, and whether there were opportunities that could be taken advantage of for registration, etc.

The group took a moment to define the goals of the community meeting – recognizing that this is a “by invitation only” event. Dorothy emphasized the importance of telling them our mandate – improving immigrant participation and LEP participation in the voting process. Rich agreed that it was important to convey what the group was looking for from the roundtable.

There was discussion around the challenges and barriers and how to talk about them efficiently. The conversations changed between alternate modes of facilitating these conversations and the importance of the anecdotal experience.

Heather led the group in outlining the roundtable and it was suggested the format follow in the draft report:

Section One: Access government/democracy

Impact

Cultural/Economic/Community

Section Two: Barrier to Access

Logistical

- Inability to vote
- Eligible but Don't or Can't

Cultural

- Education around voting
- Language barriers
- Home country experience
- Desire

Section Three: Solutions

Aaliyah suggested that as folks called out barriers, they could be categorized into various clusters. A note taker could capture the specific statements. The hope would be to have these “real time” barriers to constituents documented, and the group would be able to follow up if needed.

It was recommended that the event start with a “framing/systems” conversation parallel to Section One of the outline. Section Two would be done altogether, using flipcharts to categorize and list the items. The final section would be a facilitated discussion.

The draft agenda was proposed as follows:

- 5:30-6 pm Dinner/Informal Welcome
- 6:00-6:10 Welcome and Introductions
- 6:10-6:20 Overview of the evening and framing the “Barriers to Access” Section
- 6:20-7:20 “Barriers to Access” Testimony
- 7:20-7:50 “Solutions” Discussion
- 7:50-8:00 Wrap Up and Conclusion

Drafting Report (Sharon)

Sharon opened this portion of the meeting, highlighting the importance of knowing some key things the group wanted to include in the report. Abdullahi mentioned that property owners should be given the right to vote.

Sharon wanted to discuss the timeline of how to get to the report, if there is only one meeting in May other than the Roundtable. After some discussion it was agreed that the launch of the report would be in the fall, but that the group would commit to have a conversation with the Mayor in June about preliminary recommendations.

Sahar will do two timelines, for this budget and the next budget. Aaliyah wanted to note the fiscal implications of the policy items in the report.

Wrap-Up (Sharon)

Sharon announced that everyone needed to try to make it to the Roundtable discussion on May 8.

Adjournment

**Immigrant Voting Rights Taskforce
January 14, 5:00-6:30 PM
City Hall, Room 370**

6:40 pm.